

- In Tennessee for the period 1994-1996, noncommunicable disease accounted for 89% of white female deaths, 86% of black female deaths, 84% of white male deaths, and 75% of black male deaths. Injuries were responsible for 13% of black male deaths, 10% of white male deaths, 5% of black female deaths, and 4% of white female deaths. The communicable disease category accounted for 12% of deaths among black males, 9% among black females, and 6% among both white males and females.
- For 1994-1996, the age-adjusted injury death rate was 149 per 100,000 for black males, 92 for white males, 41 for black females, and 33 for white females. Since 1990-1992, there was a 21% increase in the rate for black females, a 6% increase for white females, and a 2% increase for white males. By contrast, the rate for black males declined 4%. The large rate increase for black females is explained by the 46% increase in their age-adjusted motor vehicle crash death rates between 1990-1992 and 1994-1996.
- For 1994-1996, the age-adjusted death rate for the communicable disease category was 114 per 100,000 population for black males. Corresponding rates for black females, white males, and white females were 50, 41, and 23, respectively. Since 1990-1992, the rate had declined 2% for white males. There were increases of 13% for black males, 8% for white females, and 3% for black females. The fact that the age-adjusted injury death rate declined as the corresponding communicable disease death rate rose among black males suggests that some males within this high risk group in 1994-1996 were dying of communicable disease instead of injury.

Ranking Tennessee's Health Status Relative to the U.S., 1996

- In 1996, Tennessee ranked 42nd among the states in the United States in overall "healthiness". It ranked 35th in 1990. Tennessee was one of 34 states whose healthiness score dropped between 1995 and 1996, and was among 13 states showing a declining score between 1990 and 1996.
- Between 1990 and 1996, Tennessee's healthiness score declined by 2%. This contrasted with the 3.6% increase registered for the nation. Increase in risk for heart disease, high prevalence of smoking, and a decline in support for public health care are among the most common causes for declining state ranks overall.
- Tennessee's healthiness score in 1996 was 11% below the average for all states combined. It was 5% below average in 1990 and 8% below in 1995.
- In 1996, Tennessee ranked close to or slightly above the national average in level of employment, infant survival, and availability of adequate prenatal care. Tennessee's strengths were identified as low unemployment, a low infant mortality rate and adequate prenatal care relative to the U.S.